

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR WOLF PROPOSALS
COMMENTS RECEIVED AS OF JANUARY 17, 2020

1. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** The quota should be set at 1. Wolves serve a vital role in achieving a healthy predator prey balance. Livestock producers should be required to make necessary adjustments to go-exist with wolves once again. It should not be at the loss of the masses to protect a few head from being taken. Calving adjustments can be made, guard animals can be used, producers can be paid back by the state and feds for their losses. I've personally observed wolves in Yellowstone National Park and consider their continued success in the park heavily reliant on what hunting is allowed outside the park boundaries. Please protect our wolves. The future of our prey populations is at stake. Thank you.

Hunting District Comment:No comment.

Amy King Susanville, CA

2. Please one wolf limit

Patty Dillard Titusville, FL

3. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** Remain at 1 wolf

Hunting District Comment: Let's preserve our wild life. Let's NOT be like Africa and lose our animals to extinction. Wolves should never again be endangered as the elephant and rhinos of Africa. Let's keep our boundaries at 1 wolf...the animals can't see the boundary lines. Thank you.

Mike Tovey Upatoi, GA

4. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I would prefer to see no changes. The ecology around Yellowstone is working and does not need this. Leave the area around Yellowstone secure for all wildlife.

Hunting District Comment: Wolves are a vital element of the ecosystem. I support a 1 wolf quota. All wildlife should be honored. We do not want to lose one of our last remaking sanctuaries where we are able to preserve ALL of our animals. The areas surrounding Yellowstone are traversed by the wolves of Yellowstone. Honor their home and give them a chance to survive for future generations to enjoy.

Sheree Tovey Upatoi, GA

5. Please limit to 1. We visited Yellowstone and were lucky enough to spot a wolf, what they have done to the environment is priceless and important!!!

Tawnja Monek Spokane, WA

6. Save the wolves 1 allowed

Mick Opfar Monongahela, PA

7. I support a reduction of the quota in units 313 and 316 to one wolf. These units border Yellowstone National Park, where wolves account for a large number of visitors annually. Wolf

watching brings in valuable dollars to neighboring communities, including Gardiner and Silver Gate/Cooke City.

Garrett Tovey Gardiner, MT

8. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** · wolves are valued for tourism and research. · Montana's economy depends on wildlife watching, especially wolves. · wolves manage elk, keeping the herds healthy. For instance, wolves target elk and deer with chronic wasting disease. (There is a peer reviewed study to show this.) · Wolves are valuable in and of themselves, apart from any value to humans.

Hunting District Comment: there is plenty of opportunity for hunters to kill wolves in the rest of Montana and this small protected area of 313 and 316 should be managed differently, with tourism and wolf research as priorities.

Joan Kresich Livingston, MT

9. I do not support reduction of the wolf harvest quota from 2 to 1, in Districts 313 and 316

William Phillips Normandy Park, WA

10. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** "MORE Wolves need harvesting". a no limit hunt would be best!! lowering the numbers is not a good idea for Rancher or hunters...

Hunting District Comment: you need to STOP with more reg. we can't understand what we do have now!!! STOP

Rex Smith Eureka, MT

11. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I support reducing the quota to 1 wolf. These are magnificent animals that are a necessary part of good conservation management.

Hunting District Comment: It is extremely important to broaden the territories around the national parks as areas that better protect these animals.

Roy Westlund Berlin, MD

12. I am opposed to the proposed change which limits the wolf harvest in WMU #313 & 316 from 2 to 1. I am in favor of the current regulation remaining in place.

Francis Irvine Lexington, VA

13. Reducing the quota from 2 to 1 in hunting districts 313 and 316 is a response to social pressures, not biological ones. This is disappointing. The quotas in these areas often do not even get met. Changing this affects the reputation you have with many hunters. Please reconsider. Thank you

Sam Helena, MT

14. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I'm opposed to any changes to the Wolf Hunting Season. I feel the current WHS that is in place is not broke and does not need fixin.

Hunting District Comment: I'm opposed to any Wolf Hunting District Boundary changes.

James W Clark Nellysford, VA

15. I'm against it!! A very bad and illogical idea by Fish and Wildlife. District I'm against it!!

Leslie Moyer Billings, MT

16. I would be fine with increasing hunting tags - I am not a fan of trapping but we need to keep reducing wolf numbers in our valley; increased hunting pressure is one answer. As the deer/elk leave the high country and concentrate on alfalfa, safety, and lazy in the valley wolves are following the dinner. I see a wolf almost every year in the valley, one took a dump right next to our chicken coop two weeks ago. A friend killed a wolf last weekend that was charging, teeth bared. Lets keep reducing the wolf pack numbers.

Royden Caldwell Eureka, MT

17. I would like to thank the Commissioners for proposing to reduce the wolf hunting quota in WMU 313 and 316 to 1, I agree with this proposal. These units are wilderness areas and very valuable for research and tourism. I spend 5 weeks of the year in your state, for the purpose of watching wolves. This financially supports the MT communities surrounding YNP. I also support communities on my way coming and going as I drive there and back home. There is plenty of opportunity for hunters to kill wolves in the rest of Montana and this small protected area of Units 313 and 316 should be managed differently with research and tourism being priorities. Thank You!

Sandra Hruby Mandan, ND

18. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I believe the changes need to be made. The wolves are very important to the ecosystem

Hunting District Comment: Yes. Make the change.

Stephanie Taylor Columbus, GA

19. I'm not even a very intelligent person and I know all data supports a strong wolf population. I encourage y'all to go with the 1 wolf quota.

Brandon Jones Midland, GA

20. I have been traveling to the Yellowstone area since 1996 to view wildlife but particularly wolves. I support limiting wolf hunting in the areas adjacent to the National Park.

Dan McDonald Naples, FL

21. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I am in full support of reducing wolf hunting quotas in WMUs 313 and 316 from two wolves to one wolf. However I am really for having NO QUOTAS in those units, as the YNP wolves are so adapted to human presence, with so many millions of visitors to the park watching them, and putting so much money into the Montana and local economies. Park visitation is down for the first time in years, and I believe that the increased killing of wolves and bison outside of the park borders has reduced those populations to a point that they are harder for park visitors to see, so less reason to visit the park. I live near YNP, and this has been my experience in the last two to three years. Stop the hunting of all park wildlife around park borders, as these animals do not know political borders, nor do they know the difference between a spotting scope (or camera) or a rifle scope. Also stop having no wolf quotas in the rest of Montana, as too many wolves are being killed. The amount of wolves killed is much larger

than reported, as poaching and natural deaths are not taken into account with your hunting seasons setting. Also, hi the hell can you have no quotas in wolf hunting when you have absolutely NO idea how few wolves are on the landscape with no longer having wolf counts??? Seems odd and wrong to me that you can count thousands of elk and deer, and not count a few hundred wolves. I believe wolf numbers are way lower than MTFWP claims. Just like the numbers of bison are way lower than the park claims. All animals have the same values, and you need to make decisions in the animals interest, as well as us nonconsumptive citizens....not in the hunters and livestock producers interests. When you allow the mass killing of wolves and bison, you take them away from the rest of us to enjoy.....forever! Also, you negatively affect the environment, as these animals bring balance to their habitats, as they evolved to do. Start seriouslyprotecting OUR wildlife, like the agency and commission were established to do, before they are gone. I have a degree in Environmental Management And Restoration Technology (EMART), and a certificate in Fish And Wildlife Law Enforcement from California Fish and Wildlife, and I am disappointed in MTFWP's and the Commission's lack of protections for predators and bison (as well as other Montana native wildlife).

Hunting District Comment: Please change wolf hunting quotas in WMUs 313 and 316 from TWO to ONE, or better yet, set the quotas in these two WMUs to ZERO. Protect park wolves and all park wildlife, as the move in and out of the park, just trying to survive. The park borders are political borders, made by humans, not natural borders, that protect the animals seeking food, shelter, water, mates.

Dagmar Riddle Whitehall, MT

22.**Wolf Season Comment:** Please keep to one wolf quota. I moved to Montana for the sole reason that I could see wolves in the GYE. That attraction has also brought thousands of tourists. Please consider that

Hunting District Comment: Please keep to 1 wolf quota!

Emily whalen Bozeman, MT

23.**Wolf Season Comment:** What a slam to the local outfitters (the ones that are left) in the Gardner area. The wolves have completely devastated the late elk season and are now contesting for what few nicer bull elk left. Let's go to bat for something that helped support the town of Gardner's economy for so long.

Hunting District Comment: creating a buffer zone doesn't change the number of wolves being killed. If we are going to let the Indian tribes shoot our game at leisure, than let's allow the white man protect his livelihood by managing wolf numbers for elk populations as well as protection of livestock

Zach Petrich Livingston, MT

24.Please lower the quota.

Ana Rode Jackson, WY

25.I do not support the reduction from 2 to 1 wolf.

Thomas Maring Seattle, WA

26. I am opposed to the change of the wolf quota north of Yellowstone park.

Carmen Hoppe Bozeman, Mt

27. I am opposed to the wolf hunting quota change north of Yellowstone park.

Olesja Hoppe Bozeman, Mt

28. I am opposed to the Montana FWP proposal to reduce the wolf hunting quota in the areas north of Yellowstone park.

Brian Hoppe Bozeman, MT

29. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I am very much opposed to this change!

Hunting District Comment: I am most opposed to this change!

William Moyer Bullings, MT

30. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** Keep it a 1 wolf quota

Hunting District Comment: Keep a boundary around Yellowstone National Park that is off limits to hunting

Augusta Emigrant, MT

31. I am a guide in Yellowstone. I make much of my living from guiding visitors to see wolves. Every time a wolf is killed, we see less wolves, visitors are very upset and negative. I support the 1 wolf policy. Even that is more than it should be. These wolves do not get into trouble, they are part of research, and they have no experience with humans as hunters.

Julianne Baker Gardiner, MT

32. Please do not reduce the limit for wolf harvest

Joe C Kent, WA

33. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I do not support the reduction from 2 wolves to 1 in units 313 and 316

Hunting District Comment: I do not support the reduction from 2 wolves to 1 in units 313 and 316

steve Guggenehimer Deer Lodge, MT

34. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** Thank you very much for lowering the quotas in Units 313 and 316 down to one wolf. Of course I would prefer there would be a quota of zero, but am aware that legislatively this is not possible. This area is wilderness area and should be managed for tourism and research. One of the areas where research would be extremely valuable is the role of carnivores in targeting ill ungulates, especially those who have CWD. I am aware that this is a very complex issue, but one we need to get a handle on. On a separate issue, I would also like to urge you to revisit creating a safe zone for wolves in Silver Gate. This is a very narrow area between the mountains through which wolves need to navigate, bringing them in close proximity to residences. The alpha female of the Lamar Canyon pack was shot on the Bannock

Trail, right where we walk our dogs every day we are at the cabin. Not an ideal place to hunt with high powered guns. Please consider ensuring that this will not happen again. Thank you!

Hunting District Comment: We are wolf watchers and rent out our cabin in Silver Gate mostly to wolf watchers and wildlife watchers. Lamar Valley is the only place in the world where one can observe the interactions of wolves in the wild. We have shared our scopes with people from all over the world, who come for the wolves. I don't need to tell you how much money they end up spending in the gateway communities, but includes food, gasoline, tourists' souvenirs and guide books, restaurants, white water float trips, and horse back riding.

Christina M Gerrits Gillette, WY

35. No hunt on wolves. None!

Sharon Aldredge Kalispell, MT

36.**Wolf Season Comment:** Please keep the quota at 1. I have visited and photographed wolves at/near Yellowstone. They are a treasure.

Hunting District Comment: Please keep the quota at 1.

Kim Bakke Goodyear, AZ

37.**Wolf Season Comment:** There are too many wolves affecting livestock and young animals. The wolf population needs to be drastically reduced.

Hunting District Comment: The wolf population needs to drastically be reduced is there an apex predator and killing lots of young wild animals and livestock.

Darren Hill Bellevue, WA

38.I support the quota being lowered to 1. I've visited the wolves in Yellowstone National Park. It was a highlight of my trip. The wolves add economic and ecological value to the area and should be protected.

Christine Adams Schenectady, NY

39.I support the one wolf quota. I've travelled and plan on traveling to Yellowstone again to photograph wolves in the wild.

Laura Chain Prescott, AZ

40.I fully support lowering the wolf quota to ONE. I Have visited Y/Stone to see the wolves. They are a natural and needed partof the ecosystem. Thank you.

S Staples Bend, OR

41.do not agree with decreasing wolf limit from 2 to 1

ron graff Gig Harbor, WA

42.**Wolf Season Comment:** I do not approve of the reduction from 2 to 1.

Hunting District Comment: My request is that we increase the allotted number of wolves in Washington state.

Marshall Klontz Bonney Lake, WA

43. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** I support 1 Wolf Quota

Hunting District Comment: I support 1 Wolf Quota

Kara Schlabach Cooke City, MT

44. I think it is ridiculous to change the quota in areas 313 and 316 from 2 wolves to 1. There is absolutely no science at all in that change. The quota probably should be 6. Montana should not be worried about Yellowstone Park and their wolf guides. Montana FWP is funded by Hunters and management of the wildlife should be science based not by social or popular beliefs of people that are not even in Montana. Leave the Quota of area 313 and 316 at 2. Daryl Shehan.

Daryl Shehan clyde park, MT

45. i do not support the limit reduction of 2 wolves to 1 in units 313 and unit 316

carl chidiac kent, WA

46. As a resident of hunting unit 313 and business owner whose livelihood is dependent on regular sightings of healthy wolves in Yellowstone's Northern Range, I strongly support the commissions' proposal to lower wolf hunt quotas to 1 wolf per unit in 313 and 316. The wolf packs that live mainly within Yellowstone move out of the national park boundaries in the winter following the prey species on which they rely. This corresponds with the open hunting season. Killing wolves that maintain summer territories in the park destabilizes pack structure and hunting capabilities. In some cases this leads to opportunistic predation on livestock and other human-wolf conflict such as occurred last year in Cooke City – Silver Gate. While there are ample opportunities to hunt wolves elsewhere in the state, Yellowstone wolves have value in research, observation and tourism that far outweighs their economic value through trophy hunting. More than 90% of my business income is from guiding wildlife watching tours and I have yet to have a client who did not wish to see a wolf. For most of my clients, that is their primary reason for visiting Northern Yellowstone and spending money in the gateway communities of Gardiner and Cooke City-Silver Gate. Several of my clients have returned again and again to watch wolves and stay in these communities, preferring their offerings and character to the inside of the park. The economic value of living wolves cannot be understated! There is an ecological value to wolves as well. Being able to live and work in an ecosystem with all of its native mammals present is a value that cannot be measured by money. It functions on its own, is balanced and is resistant to disease. Our wolves and elk do not need intensive population management (like elsewhere in the state) because they have a well-established predator prey relationship, which mutually limits their populations and their incidence of disease. This is what success looks like in an ecosystem. Thanks for keeping it so! District None proposed

Cara McGary Gardiner, MT

47. ***Wolf Season Comment:*** i do not support this

Hunting District Comments: i do not support this

james johnson AUBURN, WA

48.this is a test comment District Test comment, in reference to 313

Jeremiah Smith Livingston, MT

49.I do not support the proposal to lower the wolf quota from 2 to 1 in 313 & 316. The quota should remain the same.

Heidi ScharpingBozeman, MT

50.***Wolf Season Comment:*** The wolf population is going up every year as hunting numbers are going down. We have a serious wolf issue that needs to be addressed here in the northwest. I think wolf's need to be year round for at least 2 years so we can try and get the population down. We also dont have enough Montana residents out there hunting them. I think non residents should be able to purchase a 1-3 wolf tags. This will also create more revenue to the state as well. We need more human resources out in the field doing more studying on these animals as well to try and help us lock down on these wolfs. If we dont do something this year, the deer, elk and moose population will decrease faster then it can be stopped.

Hunting District Comment: Any district that has wolves needs to be open all year round as well to hunt.

Samuel Shadle Whitefish, MT

51.To lower the wolf tags from 2 to 1 is unreal. They fill those every year and quickly. In mountain lion quotas if they fill fast then they raise the quotas. So to lower it do to people whining over them killing wolves is unbelievable to me. While I attended the whitehall fwp meeting it was stated that the fwp told the commission that it was not a good idea to lower the tags from 2 to 1 but the commissioners wanted it lowered do to whining. This is unbelievable to me. The wolf numbers are climbing in numbers and if anyone wants to look at pictures and my log books of being in the mountains every day then please contact me. I'm in the mountains more then the biologist are and I can prove that to. This is crazy to lower the numbers

Mike Price Whitehall, MT

52.I support the proposed changes to lower the wolf hunting quotas. This is a step in the right direction to maintain and increase the wolf watching economy in Montana. The economic numbers do not lie, non-consumptive wildlife management is the economic future for Montana.

Kelly Hazen Bend, OR

53.I oppose any proposal to change or alter the current regulation to harvest two wolves in and around the Gardner area North of Yellowstone park!!

Carson Roanoke, VA

54.I think it is a detrimental decision to reduce wolf harvest numbers in WMU 313 and 316. The elk herd in this region is already a fraction of what it used to be. I believe the wolf Quota should be raised to 3-5 wolves.

Dan Gabbard Selah, WA

55.The MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commissioners should consider decreasing wolf hunting quotas for the 2020/2021 season. It has been 25 years since reintroduction and it would be a nice gesture to acknowledge the wolf supporters. Not to mention the economic value wolf watching brings to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. I know I bring in 4-8 people every winter to see wolves. Total, we drop at least \$6,000 in surrounding communities every week we visit. Wolves are an integral part of the ecosystem and necessary for healthy balance. I am 100% for a decrease in the wolf hunting quota in 2020/2021.

Sandy Zelasko Valley Center, CA

56.I support the proposal to reduce quotas from 2 to 1 in GMUs 313 and 316. Because it is difficult to hear or view wolves in Idaho due to severe persecution, I travel to Yellowstone to get my wildlife "fix." I've suffered extreme disappointment more than once to find the wolves, captured in photographs on my walls, were shot just outside the Yellowstone boundary. Please protect wildlife-watchers' interests, as well as the wildlife-watching outfitters who rely on these animals for their livelihoods. Thank you.

Pamela Williams Boise, ID

57.If anything, the quota in 313 and 316 needs to be increased. These units should be managed like the rest of the area around it, and if those wolves venture out of the park during legal seasons, they should be hunted. Period. Enough hunting has been lost in the Gardiner basin.

Tyler Stephens Livingston, MT

58.I strongly support limiting the quota to 1 Wolf per season.

Lousje Rooker Heber City, UT

59.***Wolf Season Comment:*** I am in support in the reduction of the quota to 1.

Hunting District Comment: No comments

Hannah Michaelson Martinez, CA

60.I agree with the plan to reduce the wolf quota in zones 313 and 316 from 2 to 1. I have lived in Montana since 1991 and have a home in zone 316. Wolf tourism is very important to the local economy around Yellowstone, especially Gardiner and my town of Silver Gate. Wolves have a high value for tourism and local jobs. Many of my friends are wildlife guides and having viewable wolves in the park is critical to their jobs. There is plenty of opportunities for wolf hunting further away from Yellowstone for people that want that. Let us keep shooting of wolves along the park border to a minimum.

Rick McIntyre Siver Gate, MT

61.313 should have the quota of wolves raised based on science not emotion. To either 6 as recommend by past biologists or 5 per person like the rest of the state. Being a land owner and hunter who spends most of their time in the mountains hiking. Wolves sterilize the land and have over populated. We have the largest protected area for them and they have become bold

and problematic. To protect them above other species proves that the people do not care about the rest of the environment as a whole. Emotional protection is unfair to the rest of the wildlife and habitat when based simply on warped disney mindsets and tourists ability to take easy pictures. Moose and elk have suffered in ways that without an immediate and drastic change in how we manage predators will soon leave them as memories in this area. Cwd is not a means to utilize the wolf agenda. Look at the midwest, in particular Wisconsin, they did not help the scenario at all and if anything added to the detriment of the overall herds. The rest of the state is allotted 5 per person in areas with less density. Ive seen huge packs, and multiples of them, working in close areas outside the park, on both sides of the river, as they push on for more food. I hands down saw more wolves in one day than legal elk in both seasons. Gardiner needs hunting for the economy and as many locals food source. Businesses can no longer stay open year round (adding to more paid out unemployment or hired seasonal foreign help) or later into winter now that our hunting seasons have been relentlessly cut back in order to accommodate the excessive decline in the elk population, but we only manage some of our hunters, the natives have no regulation and the predators have no management. **The wolves brought in under the understanding of "nonessential expirimental" was so that we COULD manage them. Please recognize the environmental, not just economical, necessity of allowing us to manage this apex predator, especially in areas surrounding the park where they are over protected with their sanctuary and in turn, thriving beyond responsible balance.

Hunting District Comment: No location changes, still allow hunting to the park borders, create no buffer zones.

Hilary Gardiner, MT

62.**Hunting District Comment:** I'd like to thank our FWP commissioners for proposing to lower the wolf-hunt quotas along Yellowstone's border to only one wolf in each Wolf Management Unit 313 and 316. Montana's economy depends on wildlife watching, especially wolves. There are plenty of opportunities for hunters to kill wolves in the rest of Montana. These two small areas of 313 and 316 should be managed differently, with tourism and research as priorities.

Kay A Phillips Gardiner, MT

63.I am writing to support the proposal to lower the wolf-hunt quotas to 1 wolf in Units 313 and 316. While I am not a Montana resident, I travel to Yellowstone 3-4 times a year specifically to watch wolves and bears. In doing so, I spend money at Montana hotels, groceries, shops and restaurants. I've been doing this for the last 8 years and plan to continue in the future. But my doing so does rest on the future of wolves in Montana. Wolves need to be protected – especially in the areas bordering Yellowstone as the wolves there (that are used to people) do need to travel outside the border sometimes. The stories of wolves being shot just outside the border or poached inside the border do not help maintain this element of Montana's economy. This is a wilderness area and wolves are valued for tourism and research. These areas should be managed differently than the rest of Montana. Wolves also help to manage the elk populations and keep them healthy limiting chronic wasting disease. Please support the reduction of the wolf quotas in these areas. Thank you

Virginia Wolfe Vashon, WA

64. **Hunting District Comment:** Totally agree with proposed restrictions by Yellowstone Park boundary.

Ardis Richards Pleasant Hill, CA

65. I am not opposed to hunting wolves in Montana, but I do believe that the quota should be lowered along Yellowstone National Park's border. These lands would be better managed with tourism and wolf research as priorities. The Yellowstone wolf packs that use these border areas bring in valuable revenue to the local communities and the scientific data that is being gathered from the ongoing research of these wolves is valuable not only for wildlife research, but for studying human-predator interface, ranching and hunting issues.

Sherryl Clendenen San Luis Obispo, CA

66. **Hunting District Comment:** I urge you to approve reducing hunted wolf quotas to 1 wolf per season in the hunting areas along the borders of Yellowstone National Park. My family travels to the Yellowstone region each summer for a period of approximately 10 days. A major attraction for us is the opportunity to see wolves in the Yellowstone Park. We stay in local hotels, eat in local restaurants, etc. We have made this trip annually since 2000. We love Montana, we love the wildness of the region, and believe that wolves support and foster that wildness.

Charles Richards Pleasant Hill, CA

67. Please limit wolf hunting to the lowest possible number. They need protection not killing. The economy of Montana is greatly increased by people like me who stay in hotels in Gardiner and Bozeman only because there are wolves in Yellowstone. Killing wolves only benefits a few vocal trophy hunters.

Marlene Sigman Ringoes, NJ

68. **Wolf Season Comment:** Respectfully request to lower the quota in wolf management units 313 & 316 to one wolf. These 2 small areas are 95% collared wolves and therefore need to be managed separately.

Hunting District Comment: Respectfully request to lower the quota in wolf management units 313 & 316 to one wolf. Thank you for your consideration.

Andy Straube Hannibal, MO

69. **Wolf Season Comment:** Respectfully request that MFW commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Mgmt units 313 & 316 to one wolf per unit. YNP is the only place in Montana where wolf watchers and researchers have a reasonable chance of studying and seeing a wolf in the wild. A chance of a lifetime many don't get. Plus, this small change does not affect the hunters. So many other places in Montana where these hunters can go kill a wolf. This small area of 313 and 316 should remain a priority for tourism and research.

Hunting District Comment: Please reduce the quota in Wolf Mgmt units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. This year we even lost an extra wolf in unit 313. So the smaller the quota, the better off wolves are. These park wolves killed in these two small units live 95% in the park and only follow food source just outside the invisible boundary. Thank you for your consideration.

Lori Koehn Key West, FL

70. *Wolf Season Comment:* I would like to take the time to respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. While the number of wolves hunting elk stayed consistent, the number of elk in unit 313 has increased by 76%. Hunters are not losing out to wolves in these two units. For example: In 2018, unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. In 2018, unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. Wolves manage elk. In both units the Hunter Success Rate was much higher in 2018. If the commissioners reduce the quota in 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take. Those two wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. Therefore, the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

Hunting District Comment: I would like to take the time to respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant. There is plenty opportunity for hunter to kill wolves in the rest of Montana. This small protected area of 313 and 316 should be managed differently, with tourism and wolf research as priorities. The 2005 FWP Elk Management Plan states that units 313 and 316 support the Northern Yellowstone elk herd a/k/a The Northern Range herd per NPS. Yellowstone wolves follow this food source whether the elk are in the park or outside of the park in units 313 and 316. But most wolves and elk return to the park as winter ends. Therefore, the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are. It's time to make a change. Two down to one!

GLORIA STRAUBE Hannibal, MO

71. *Wolf Season Comment:* I want to first thank the FWP Commissioners and I agree with them on lowering the wolf hunt quota to 1 along the Yellowstone border.

Hunting District Comment: In this area of 313 and 316 wolves are a value to tourism and research. The wolves also keep elk and deer herds healthy (they take the weak and the sick). There is plenty of opportunity for hunters in the other parts of Montana for hunting wolves - please protect this small area of 313 and 316 to be managed differently. And allow people like me and my family to be able to come and view they beautiful animal. The wolves are a value to tourism and research. Thank you!

Vicki L Schlieff Silver City, SD

72. Dear Commissioners, thank you for proposing to lower the wolf-hunt quotas along Yellowstone's border to only 1 wolf in each Wolf Management Unit 313 and 316! This lower quota is really important in these hunting units / wilderness area. We have no ranching and wolves here are valued for tourism and research. Many businesses in Gardiner depend on the tourism dollars that come from watching and photographing these wolves. It is also important to keep the quota low in order for the wolves to help keep diseases like CWD in check. Not to mention

there are plenty of hunting opportunities throughout the state for hunters. Thank you for your time!

Sabina Strauss Gardiner, MT

73. *Wolf Season Comment:* I'm a retired scientist. I've made 40 to 50 trips to Montana to watch wolves in YNP (I stay in Silver Gate). I've been interested in wolf restoration since I read Dave Mech's book *The Wolves of Isle Royale* in 1967. I view of the laws of Montana, I'm in favor of the quota of one wolf in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316. As you know, wolves no doubt help protect the ungulate herds from chronic wasting disease. And, money generated from the wolf-watching businesses greatly contributes to the Montana economy.

Hunting District Comment: not applicable(?)

Bob MacPherson, PhD Santa Fe, NM

74. Thank you for proposing the change in wolf harvests from 2 to 1 in WMU 313 and 316. I pray the proposal is approved. Since 2011, I visit Yellowstone 2 to 4 times every year just to see wolves and I spend a great deal on money from West Yellowstone, to Gardiner to SilverGate/Cooke City, I am not the only one. I share my scope with others who have never seen a wild wolf and their joy is incredible to see. Some even cry having finally seen a wild wolf, they are overjoyed. In the past, a Yellowstone pack wolf has been taken just outside the park boundary and that specific loss has caused harmful impacts on their remaining pack members, splintering the pack. Again, thank you for the proposal. My family and I pray the proposal is approved. We hope to continue visiting the Yellowstone area for many years to come to watch those wolf packs.

Karen Wolfe Phoenix, AZ

75. *Hunting District Comment:* Thanks for letting me comment regarding lowering the wolf hunt quotas along Yellowstone National Parks northern border. I drive up from Pocatello, ID at least three times a year, stay in either Cooke City or Gardner just to see wolves with my spotting scope. The small protected areas 313 and 316 should be managed differently. I was in Cooke early in December of 2018 when one of the Lamar wolves was legally shot as it wandered just outside of the park. Several days later, near midnight I heard howling and I'm sure it was the Lamar pack trying to contact that male wolf. Give the wolves a break, as there is plenty of room elsewhere in Montana for hunters to kill wolves.

Scott MacButch Pocatello, ID

76. I want to comment in favor of having a quota of 1 for the management units around Yellowstone. I visit Yellowstone 1-2 times a year (twice this year) and it is specifically to see wolves and other wildlife like bears and bison. I appreciate MTFWP having the foresight to recognize wildlife watchers as a very important constituent protecting at least a small part of Montana for uses other than hunting. Thanks again District I support having protection for wolves around Yellowstone and continue to suggest to have a buffer like management unit around the park with very low quotas (even if it isn't officially called a buffer)...

Jonathan G Way Osterville, MA

77. I strongly favor the move to change the quotas in both WMU 313 and 316. Please drop the quotas in both from 2 to 1. This is a wilderness area and there are plenty of other areas in Montana to hunt wolves. Wolves have become an important part of the local economy. I myself come from Southern California twice every year specifically to see wolves. I spend money in the local area.

Susan Timm Long Beach, CA

78. **Wolf Season Comment:** First thank you for this consideration. I strongly believe in this. Wolves play such an important role in the ecosystem and environment. They actually help control the Elk population leaving plenty of healthy elk for hunters. Research indicates their main prey are sick, old and injured elk. I specifically visit Montana several times a year for the wolves putting many thousands of dollars into the Montana economy. Millions of folks visit the area for wolves and wildlife. Wolves are so very important for so many reasons. 313 and 316 is a small area and should be managed separately from the rest of the state. By approving this there are still many opportunities for Hunters outside of this area and within the state. Please approve the reduction in quota from 2 to 1 in WMU313 and 316.

Hunting District Comment: Please approve this boundary change/quota change.

Lynn Reed Oro Valley, AZ

79. Leave 313 & 316 as is, they are outside the park and it's not your job to protect park wolves.

Danny Lewis Libby, MT

80. I would like to thank the Fish, Wildlife and Park commissioners for proposing to lower the wolf harvest quota in WMU s 313 and 316 from two to one. I believe that this is an important step in keeping the packs inside YNP intact. As you know many people go to YNP specifically to see wolves which is a huge benefit to the local economy. I believe that it's important to keep the packs intact, as much as possible, so that those packs can be studied and the natural ebb and flow of their numbers observed over the long run. Thank you very much for your proposal and I encourage you to follow through with these important changes.

Ron Wilkinson Bozeman, MT

81. **Wolf Season Comment:** Thank you for this new thinking. I have been coming to Yellowstone since 2005 just to see the wolves, and have learned an incredible amount through the Wolf Project. These animals have changed the dynamics of the park totally, making it far more healthy. I very much appreciate the recommendation of lowering the harvesting to one wolf per district. I have watched families for years, and followed their life stories. These are incredibly sensitive and intelligent animals and deserve a rightful place on the planet. Science has proven their worth, and thank you for considering lowering the harvest number. I have spent many dollars in the surrounding communities to spend time seeing the wolves.

Hunting District Comment: I did not see the information on the boundary changes, however, hope that there is area that will be safer for the wolves. They need to be able to travel and breed, cross in and out of the park for prey and safety. Thank you!

Douglass A Smith Wilmington, NC

82.thank you for considering lowering the quota along the park border to 1 wolf , we come up there twice a year now to see the wolves with our grand kids. its a highlight of the year for us ***dale baker steamboat springs, CO***

83.I am writing to support the changes to reducing the wolf quota around Yellowstone National Park to one wolf. The value offered to the region through tourism is invaluable and wolves are a distinct part of that appeal. My family travels to the region a couple times a year, in great part to see the wildlife in the area and at the top of that list is wolves. The reduction is the right thing to do and I am writing to support it. Thank you.

Janis Giesa Spokane, WA

84.***From: Beth Phillips <dogsrule.bp@gmail.com>***

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 6:48 PM

To: FWP Commission <FVComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment on proposal to change wolf quota in Units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to urge you to lower the quota of wolves hunted and killed in Units 313 and 316 from 2 down to 1 wolf in each unit.

I have been a frequent visitor to Yellowstone National Park and the GYE since my first Yellowstone backpacking trip in [1995](#). You can't imagine the thrill of a lifetime I had when I saw my first wolf in the wild (actually 7 of them) on a backpacking trip in 2006, which ultimately got me hooked on [wolf-watching.in](#) [wolf-watching.in] Yellowstone National Park. I currently travel annually to the GYE and spend upwards of \$3000 per trip in Montana alone. This year, I will be visiting 2 times for 2-weeks each trip.

Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 border Yellowstone National Park. Many of the wolves killed in these Units have been Yellowstone wolves. Of the 37 wolves that have been hunted and killed in these Units, 30 of them have been Yellowstone wolves (spending 95% of their lives inside Yellowstone National Park). These wolves are just following their food source, the Northern Yellowstone Elk herd as it moves into and out of the Park, and the majority of these wolves return to Yellowstone as winter ends.

Since many people, such as myself, come to Yellowstone to specifically see wolves (along with other wildlife), one can easily see how valuable these Yellowstone wolves are to the economy. I know many people who have stopped coming to Yellowstone and the GYE specifically because Yellowstone wolves have been killed in the wolf hunts. After Yellowstone wolf 926F was shot and killed in November of

2018, I went back and forth on if I should boycott your state. After much consideration, I decided to continue to visit because I wanted to support the people and businesses in the area who see the value of and respect the existence of wolves.

The popular anti-wolf talking point of wolves decimating the elk herds, just doesn't hold water if you look at the numbers and the science. In 2011 the Yellowstone Wolf Project counted 38 Northern Range wolves (these are most likely the wolves that travel into Units 313 and 316) and in 2018 they counted 39 Northern Range wolves - fairly consistent numbers. However, the elk population from 2011 to 2018 in just Unit 313 alone went from 3,259 elk to 5,738 - an increase of 76%, and that unit is now well over objective. Plus hunters killed 38% more elk in 2018 than in 2011 in Unit 313, and 173% more in Unit 316. It is quite clear that the Yellowstone wolves, while killing elk, are not lessening the chances of a human hunter killing an elk.

Statistics have shown that over the years that Montana has had a wolf hunt, Units 313 and 316 often gone over quota. This year in Unit 313, 3 wolves have been killed instead of the allotted 2. Nothing has ever been done to rectify this, such as lowering the quota in the adjacent Unit. So the smaller the quota in these units, the better off the Yellowstone wolves are.

Societal norms and values are changing regarding hunting and wildlife. The number of wolf licenses sold in 2017 was down 8% from 2011, while visitation to Yellowstone increased by 21% during this same time frame. And these Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in the GYE, and the Montana Gateway Communities during that time.

If you look at the science, the money, and public perception, one can't help but conclude that Yellowstone wolves are far more valuable alive than they are dead.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comment.

Beth Phillips

2031 S 95th St

West Allis, WI 53227

85.From: Tatiana Tatarinova <ttatarinova@laverne.edu>

Sent: Friday, January 10, 2020 5:51 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on the quota in wolf management units

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to you to request the Montana Fish & Wildlife to reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

The government statistics consistently shows that wolves do not reduce the elk population, contrary to the arguments of opposition. In 2011 FWP counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and found the unit was “at objective’. Seven years later, the elk population had increased in the same unit to 5,738, a 76% increase (FWP, 2018).

Also, according to the same source, in 2018 in the units 313 and 316 the elk harvest by hunters increased by 38% and 173% respectively, compared to 2011, despite the increase in the wolf population. This clearly indicates there is no concern with hunters losing to wolves in the units 313 and 316. On the other hand, this year in unit 313 hunters killed three wolves instead of two, going over quota. So, reducing the quota is necessary to prevent over-hunting of the wolves.

Many wolves in these two units are, in fact, Yellowstone wolves. According to Senator Mike Phillips comment (2019, SB 185), of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Collar data of the killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park.

Yellowstone National Park is a unique place where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. A consistent increase in the number of visitors to Yellowstone (21% increase in 2017 as compared to 2011) and a decrease in the wolf hunting licenses sold (8% down in 2017 since 2011), is a clear indicator of the growing popularity of the wolf watching rather than wolf killing. Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012, according to The National Park Service data. A 2018 peer-reviewed NPS study found Yellowstone visitors still ranked seeing wildlife as just below “extremely important.”

To summarize, wolves in the units 313 and 316 are more useful and needed alive rather than killed.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Dr. Tatiana Tatarinova

Endowed Chair in Computational Biology

University of La Verne

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86.From: Susan Rhem-Westhoff <rhemwesthoff@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, January 17, 2020 12:24 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Lowering the Hunting Quotas in Units 313 & 316 - Wolves of Yellowstone

Dear Commissioners,

My family and I travel to Yellowstone National Park at least twice a year. While we love the beautiful country and all the incredible wildlife, it is the wolves we travel to see. Like the bison, the gray wolf is an iconic symbol for all that is wild and free. This beautiful animal is not only a thrill of a lifetime for visitors to view through a scope, it is a necessary apex predator for a balanced ecosystem.

I understand the original agreement to allow wolf hunting was formed as part of the reintroduction. Agreements regarding wildlife/nature should never be viewed as static, set in stone contracts. We have learned much since the first wolves were reintroduced 25 years ago this month. Besides the critical role they play in creating a healthy ecosystem, we have learned that no species in the park is responsible for the huge economic boon the wolf reaps for the park border towns and beyond.

37 Yellowstone wolves, who spend 95% of their time in the park, have been killed for stepping across an imaginary boundary. 30 of them in units 313 & 316. This is unethical, trophy hunting, plain and simple. Nobody eats wolves. On the other hand, a lot of people eat because of the dollars spent by visitors coming to the best place in the world to see a wolf in the wild. The wolves are often baited and shot on sight by hunters in Gardiner & Jardine who spot them through a scope, waiting for them to cross that imaginary line.

It is time to recognize formally that the agreement to allow wolf trophy hunting outside the park boundaries is outdated and unethical. Please consider lowering the quota in units 313 and 316 to the lowest number you are legally allowed. Wolves are a national treasure as are our parks.

Respectfully,

Susan Rhem-Westhoff

87.From: LORI Consaga <loriconsaga@yahoo.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 9:08 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWSComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for the Proposal to change Wolf quota Units 313 & 316

Montana Fish & Wildlife

Helena, Montana

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing you today with sadness in my heart. I would love for you to decide to lower the quota in Wolf Management for units 313 & 316 to one per unit. It is a fact that the Elk herds in these units has increased by 76% since 2011.

Senator Mike Phillips reported that 37 Yellowstone wolves have been killed since the hunting of wolves became legal in units 313 & 316. Tourists come to Yellowstone to see Wolves & Bears in the wild. I think by lowering the quota in these units they might have a chance for survival. Wolves in wild have a hard life to start off with. They can be killed hunting for food, over territory, leadership, ect. They have a very tough life.

I am sure that you are all aware of the facts that support this decision. I can only pray that you find it in your heart to lower the quota in these units to one per unit. Wolves are very important to nature and the balance in the environment. Take one key factor out of the environment and it start to fall apart.

I can go on and continue with more facts but I will leave this in your hands and pray that you make the right decision for the wolves and lower the quota to one per unit. I thank you so much for taking the time to read my letter and hopefully make the right decision.

Thanks so much!! Enjoy your day,

Lori Consaga

65 Deans Corner Rd
Brewster, NY 10509

845-278-2851

88.From: Joyce Levy <parisrain1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 6:22 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment On Proposal to Change Wolf Quota in Units 313 & 316

January 14, 2020

Dear Sir/Sirs

I am writing this letter to respectfully ask that the Montana Fish and Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. Actually, the elk herds have increased.

Many wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves. Yellowstone wolves follow their food source whether the elk are inside the park or outside in units 313 and 316.

YWP Annual Report for 2018 reported that the number of elk in 313 actually INCREASED by 76%.

Hunters are NOT losing out to wolves in these units. In both units the Hunter Success Rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

Wolves are plentiful elsewhere in Montana. Hunters are allowed to shoot them so why do they also get the opportunity to kill additional wolves in units 313 and 316 ??

People, like myself, want to visit Yellowstone National Park to get the opportunity to see wolves in the wild. There is more chance of doing this if the wolves are permitted to live, as they certainly should be! Units 313 and 316 have gone over quota in the past. The smaller the quota in each unit, the better off the wolves are.

Thank you for reading this and for your consideration. It is much appreciated.

Joyce Levy

89.From: Heidi Pinkerton <post@heidipinkerton.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 11:36 AM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

I am respectfully requesting that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

Thank you,

Heidi

90.From: Vicki Markus <vicki.markus@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2020 4:03 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in Units 313-316

Dear Commissioners;

I am writing on behalf of your upcoming meeting in which you will be deciding whether to lower the wolf quota in Units 313 and 316.

I am a non-consumptive user of our public lands. While I don't live in MT, I have spent approximately \$25,000 over the years coming to Yellowstone primarily in the winter, so the majority of that money was spent flying into Bozeman and staying in Gardiner.

I come for one reason. To see the wolves. Every year, I am dismayed to learn that another Yellowstone Wolf or wolves have been legally shot right outside the border in MT in units 313 or 316. And many times, it seems the hunters go over quota. 30 Yellowstone wolves have been killed in these two units and data from their collars suggest they spend 95% of their time in the park. They happen to follow the elk out of the park and bam! they are killed. For me, and others like me who come to the park to see these wolves and know their stories, this is devastating news and there will come a point in time where I will stop coming and spending money in the state of MT because it pains me so!

I am asking you to please consider lowering the quota in Units 313-316 to one wolf per unit. That is simply asking you to reduce the number of wolves killed in your state every year by less than 1% of the number of wolves killed statewide.

Hunters took more elk in unit 313 in 2018 (I believe they took 38% more than in 2011) and in unit 318 they took 173% more elk in 2018 than they did in 2011. I believe you have also stated that in unit 313 in 2011 you counted 3259 elk which you stated was your objective, but in 2018 in unit 313 you counted 5738 which was 76% over objective. So, there is absolutely no scientific reason to be killing two wolves in unit 313 and 316.

I appreciate your thoughtful and scientific consideration to lower the quota once and for all to one wolf in each of the units 313 and 316 that border Yellowstone National Park.

Regards,

Vicki Markus

Vicki Markus

91. **From:** Allison LaRose <allison11490@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 10:21 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners,

Please consider reducing the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. Studies have shown that wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. Over the past 8 years, the elk population has increased by more than 75%. And the hunter success rate for elk was higher in 2018 than it was in 2011. Furthermore, the majority of the wolves killed in these two units are Yellowstone wolves who simply cross the park boundary. Since wolves can be hunted legally throughout the entire state of Montana, why do they have to be hunted in units 313 and 316? There are many other areas throughout the state where hunters have had success. In 2011, hunters and trappers took 166 wolves statewide, and in 2017, that number increased to 254.

As a Yellowstone visitor and avid wildlife watcher, I am not alone in my appreciation for wolves. The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant. FWP records reveal the number of wolf licenses sold in 2017 was 8% lower than the number sold in 2011. Additionally, the number of visitors to Yellowstone was up 21% in 2017 from 2011. Given the statewide economic contributions that Yellowstone wildlife watchers provide, wolves in units 313 and 316 are increasingly more valuable alive than dead.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Allison LaRose

92. **From:** Charlotte Sainz <merisholuce11@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2020 1:46 PM

To: FWP General <fwpgen@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Regarding the Slaughter of Gray Wolves in Montana

Importance: High

Dear People,

Wolves are a vital part of the eco system and environmental control. Why are you allowing the slaughter of so many in MONTANA? Why is there no respect for part of our living planet. You above all departments should be aware of the environmental impact when Man decides to put aside that which Mother Nature has installed as a security system and take matters into his own hands. I am ashamed to be in a state where this is happening.

UPDATE ON THE TROPHY HUNTING OF WOLVES IN MONTANA AND WYOMING and URGENT CALL TO ARMS!!!!

As of noon today, a total of 233 wolves have been murdered in the two states trophy hunting season for simply being a gray wolf.

185 beloved Gray Wolves have been taken from their families of Montana Wolf Nation and Wyoming trophy hunters have killed 48 wolves as of Friday evening. With the 10 killed by Wildlife Services in Wyoming we have lost 243 wolves to date.....

Unit kills in Montana are:

Unit 100-9 kill; U101-24 kills; U121-17 kills; U130-23 kills; U150-4 kills; U200-14 kills; U210 2 kiils; U250-13 kills; U290-25 kills; Unit 310-6 kills; Unit 313-3 Kill; Unit 320-6 kills; Unit 330-8 kills; U390-19 kills; U400-13 kills. 185 BEAUTIFUL WOLVES' HOWLS WERE FOREVER SILENCED IN MONTANA. .'

Wyoming wolf kills remain at a total of 58 WOLVES SILENCED FOREVER IN WYOMING :'(for over a month now. Apparently the department is NOT keeping their totals up to date so how many other howls have been silenced in Wyoming we do not know at this time.

TOTAL TROPHY ZONE KILLS -26

PREDATORY Area- No Quota Total Kills 22

Wildlife Contract Services -10 Kills

TOTAL WOLF HOWLS SILENCED IN WYOMING --58 TO DATE.

Killing our wildlife for profit is NOT acceptable.....under any circumstances.

Regards,

Charlotte Sainz

93.From: *snugvallie* <snugvallie@aol.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 12:51 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Respectfully request for Montana Fish and Wildlife Commissioners : A public comment on the proposal to change the wolf quota in units 313 and 316 to 1 per unit.

Regarding the reduction of elk because of wolves. In 2018 the elk population has grown 76% since 2011.

Since they started legalizing hunting of the wolf in 2017 they took 254 wolves. At Yellowstone there were 37 taken and 30 of them was in the areas 313 and 316. And alot of them were wearing collars. Showing that 95% of the time they were in the park.

I would just like to say if you would drop the quota down to one wolf per unit on 313 and 316. The hunters will kill 2 instead of 3 and save some wolves lives.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S10e, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone

Most folks go to the park to see the wild life, wolves bears etc., they would rather shoot them with there cameras instead of a gun. They also help the surrounding areas with there tourism!!

I just would like our next generation to see these majestic souls in the wild not in a cage!! I don't want to see another 1929!!!!

Thank all of you for your time and consideration!!

Sharon McAndrews

94.**From: JUDY MCMULLEN <jilmcmullen@comcast.net>**

Sent: Sunday, January 12, 2020 11:07 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Wolf hunting units 313 and 316 comments

I am writing to ask that you reduce the wolf quota in hunting units 313 and 316 from two wolves to one. For the past 18 years, I have visited Yellowstone, sometimes twice a year, just to see and study wolves. In those years, I have spent quite a bit of money in Gardiner and Cooke City, MT. The wolves that reside in Yellowstone spend most of their time in the park. Since there are plenty of wolves in Montana to hunt, reducing the quota near the park is a reasonable request. Wolves in the park tend to manage their own numbers and do not need humans to do that for them. Yellowstone is the best place in the world, in my opinion, to watch wolves and learn about their behavior. Those of us who travel there frequently to watch the packs develop a fondness for them, and losing them to hunters really does affect us and also disrupts the packs we enjoy watching. I have noticed a marked increase in the number of people

who visit Yellowstone, even in the winter, over the past several years to wolf watch. I used to pretty much have Lamar Valley to myself in the past. That is no longer the case.

While I would rather see a protective “border” around the park where no wolves can be hunted, myself and many others would at least like to see the quota reduced to one wolf. The way I see it, the park wolves are worth more to the state of Montana if they are alive.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Judy McMullen

Winchester, VA

95.From: Renee Espenel <neeandjohn@msn.com>

Sent: Friday, January 17, 2020 11:03 AM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

To: Montana Fish and Wildlife Commissioners

Subject: Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners,

Wolves have had a profound and positive impact on the environment and economy of Yellowstone National Park with no impact to hunters in units 313 and 316. Additionally, wolves have increased revenue in YNP and the gateway communities of: Gardiner, Silver

Gate, and Cooke City. As wolf watching statistically increases, it is important to remember that those gateway communities are fast spreading to Emigrant, Pray, Livingston, and even Bozeman. And these people are coming to watch wolves, not hunt them!

Wildlife viewing is a cornerstone of park visitation and attributes to millions of dollars in revenue for the outlying areas of Cooke City/Silver Gate and Gardiner. I personally enjoy all aspects of the park, but the majority of time I spend there is for the wolves. I am sure that this is also true for the over 4.2 million visitors to Yellowstone annually, that are spending money on guided tours, lodging, food, gas, and memorabilia. I am fortunate to visit 2-3 times a year and each visit is around 7-10 days and contributes to these gateway communities approximately \$2500.00 each trip, and I am just one of many. It would be of benefit to consider that, wolves bring in over 5 million dollars annually, and I know that given the increasing amounts of visitors to specifically see wolves, this is only going to increase. Simply more wolves, equates more money!

*Support: **FWP records reveal the number of wolf licenses sold in 2017 (latest data online) was 8% lower than the number sold in 2011. (2011 MT Wolf Hunting Season Report. 2017 MT Wolf Harvest Report)***

Meanwhile, 21% more visitors came to Yellowstone in 2017 compared to 2011. (NPS data)

Not only have more wildlife watchers come, they've left more money behind: Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012. (NPS data).

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild.

The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant.

Watching wolves or grizzly bears are two of the biggest draws of visitors to Yellowstone, according to a past NPS study.

A 2018 peer-reviewed NPS study found Yellowstone visitors still ranked seeing wildlife as just below "extremely important."

Visitor dollars create jobs in the Montana gateway communities of Gardiner, Silver Gate/Cooke City, and West Yellowstone.

With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead.

Wolves have **NOT** impacted elk populations in Unit 313.

Scientific Support: Wolves have not reduced elk herds in these units. In 2011, the year wolf hunting returned, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and considered that unit “at objective.” (2011 Statewide Elk Estimate, FWP)

In 2018 unit 313 had 5,738 elk. The population had increased by 76% over the 2011 count and was “over objective.” (2018 Statewide Elk Trend Estimate, FWP)

Wolves have **NOT** impacted hunting elk in 313 and 316.

Support: In 2018 in unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database)

In 2018 in unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database)

In both units the Hunter Success Rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

Many of the wolves taken in these two units **ARE** Yellowstone wolves, and that reduces the potential for wildlife viewing.

Support: The 2005 FWP Elk Management Plan states that units 313 and 316 support the Northern Yellowstone elk herd. The National Park Service (NPS) calls these elk the Northern Range herd. Yellowstone wolves follow this food source, whether the elk are in the park or outside the park in units 313 and 316. But most wolves and elk return to the park as winter ends.

Senator Mike Phillips reported that of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Data from collars of killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park. (2019 comment by Senator Phillips to Montana Senate re: SB 185)

The number of wolves living in Yellowstone’s Northern Range helps determine the number of wolves hunted outside the park in 313 and 316.

In 2011, the Yellowstone Wolf Project counted 38 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report 2011)

In 2018, they counted 39 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report 2018)

While the number of wolves hunting elk stayed consistent, the number of elk in unit 313 increased by 76%.

Experience shows that units 313 and 316 have gone over quota in the past. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. So the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

Renee Espenel

1226 SE 47th Ave. Portland, Ore 97215

503-233-1209

From: Waldo Montgomery <wwmontgom@outlook.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 2:32 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners:

Although I live in Texas, I visit Yellowstone NP at least twice a year and usually stay two weeks to a month. As I'm sure you have often heard, "Yellowstone is the best place in the world to see wolves in the wild," and that's the reason I keep going back year after year. During my early trips to the park, I flew into Bozeman and rented a car. Nowadays, I enjoy bringing my dog with me, so I drive. It's a long three-day trip each way but worth it to see and photograph Yellowstone's magnificent wolves. I'm 77 years old, so I'm approaching old age, but I'll keep going back for as long as I'm physically able and for as long as there are wolves to be seen in the park.

I usually spend about \$4,000 on each of my twice a year pilgrimages to Yellowstone. These trips occur in May and October. Over half of my expenses is spent for lodging in Gardiner where I most often stay and occasionally in Silver Gate which is closer to the wolves in the Lamar Valley.

There are hundreds of avid wolf-watchers like myself and countless visitors who flock to the park in droves in hopes of getting a glimpse of a wolf. Times have changed and the American public and foreign visitors perceive wolves differently than they did a generation or two ago. Wolves are popular, especially Yellowstone's wolves, and gateway communities benefit economically from wolf-watchers like me even during the winter off-season months.

I don't think it's possible to be an avid wolf-watcher and not form some emotional attachment to various park wolves. I know that certainly applies to me. Jann Webb, a late friend of mine who also loved Yellowstone's wolves once said: "With the blessings and privilege of being able to follow the elusive lives of wild wolves, there is both the joy and heartbreak of knowing them so intimately." No truer words were ever spoken. Like many other wolf-watchers, I shudder when Montana's wolf hunting season opens, and although I know that Hunting Units 313 and 316 bordering the park have quotas of only two wolves each, I break out in a cold sweat whenever I hear of a wolf being killed in either unit—

especially a collared wolf. We all worry that the wolf killed may be a Yellowstone wolf and, even more tragically, one that's highly visible and popular among park visitors. Some wolves, like the legendary "06" and her famous daughter, 926F, are what I call "Million Dollar Wolves." Thousands of visitors came to the park just to get a glimpse of them, and, if they were really lucky, maybe a photograph. As you are undoubtedly aware, the killing of these two wolves, albeit "legally," created public outrage resulting in boycotting of businesses in Cooke City and other gateway communities. Then, too, there was the public outcry when hunters recently went over quota in Unit 313 where three wolves were killed instead of two. In my humble opinion, MT FWP could have mitigated some of the fallout this incident produced by applying the over quota kill to Unit 316 or another hunting unit that was still below quota. According to Senator Mike Phillips: of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since Montana began hunting them legally, 30 were killed in Units 313 and 316. That's resulted in long-term resentment by the vast number of non-consumptive park visitors who do their "hunting" with spotting scopes and cameras. The Yellowstone wolves taken in these two hunting units weren't like those born and living outside the park. Yellowstone's wolves are naïve and conditioned to the presence of park visitors, traits which make them easy pickings for shooters lying in wait for them outside the park boundary. I'm reluctant to label these individuals as "hunters." Taking unfair advantage of animals in this fashion instead places them in the category of pathological "wolf-haters." Ethically, there's a huge difference. And finally, there's the adverse ripple effect that the loss of a pack's alpha male or female has on the adhesiveness of Yellowstone's wolf packs. The alphas are the glue that hold the pack together. Lose one or both of them to trophy hunters and the pack often disintegrates with the inexperienced pups either dying or turning to easy pickings like livestock if they should wander outside the park. Making fewer park wolves susceptible to being killed in Units 313 and 316 would benefit park visitors, the gateway communities, ranchers, and would likely create fewer problems for FWP.

Some elk hunters and outfitters claim that wolves are decimating the elk in Unit 313. Not so! In 2018 there were almost 6,000 elk in Unit 313 which is a 76% population increase compared to the 3,259 "at objective" population in 2011. The reality is: the elk in Unit 313 are now significantly "over objective." Hunter success rates in both units were also significantly higher in 2018 as compared to 2011 according to the FWP online database.

I have one last point to make. I saved this until last because of the reluctance of most Northern Rocky Mountain state wildlife officials to even entertain the notion that gray wolves may be Nature's best defense in combatting the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) epidemic. Even so, have you ever wondered why no instance of CWD has surfaced in YNP or been found in the Northern Elk Herd? Could it be that in YNP with its relatively high density of wolves, they are quick to detect infected animals and promptly take them down, thereby keeping the herd healthy? I mention this just as a theoretical possibility—a hunch if you will, but something that should perhaps be studied. Perhaps that should be an "unspoken" consideration in deciding whether or not to reduce the wolf quotas in Units 313 and 316. Thank you.

I respectfully request that the Commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. Doing so would reduce the ongoing loss of park wolves and would demonstrate to

gateway business owners that MT FWP understands the economic importance of Yellowstone's wolves to their communities.

Thank you for considering my comments

Kindest Regards,

Waldo Montgomery

200 Lake Road, Apt 904

Belton, TX 76513

wwmontgom@outlook.com

96.From: david hans <wolfdog615@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 11, 2020 1:09 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comments for Yellowstone wolves

To Who It may Concern:

Each year I am part of a big group that comes to Yellowstone to watch wolves. We don't have any here in Nashville TN so Yellowstone is the only place we can see them in the wild. We spend lots of money in your state too and plain tickets aren't cheap to there.

I request that you reduce your wolf kill quotas in 313 and 316. Too many park wolves are getting needlessly shot here and it makes all of us hunters look bad when it happens. Elk Counts are way up in these zones so there is really no reason not to do this. I know wolves are considered big game there in MT but these are mostly park wolves conditioned to humans a bit.

thanks and hope you do the right thing

Ben Smothers

Sent from [Outlook \[aka.ms\]](#)

97.From: Carolyn Golba <golbacarolyn@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 7:50 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWSComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

I am a Montana resident that enjoys wolf watching. That is what brought me to Montana. It is the only place in the world where one can actually watch wolves and their activity. Through the past 15 years I have experienced the increase of tourist from around the world who travel to Yellowstone to see wolves. Wolves and grizzly bears are the main draw to Yellowstone for tourist. Tourist dollars create jobs in the Montana gateway communities of West Yellowstone, Gardiner, Silvergate/Cooke City.

I am asking that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

In 2018 unit 313 had 5,738 elk. The population had increased by 76% over the 2011 count and was "over objective." In 2018 in unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. In 2018 in unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. In both units the hunter success rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

Many of the wolves in units 313 and 316 that have been taken are Yellowstone wolves. In 2019 unit 313 had three wolves killed by hunters instead of two. So the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carolyn Golba

505 Gallatin Ave

West Yellowstone, MT 59758

98.From: Leslie <ecoscaples.lelie@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 7:41 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWSComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to request that the Montana wolf quota in units 313 and 316 be reduced to the lowest possible legal quota.

Although I live in Wyoming, my residence in Sunlight Basin is very close to the Montana border and Cooke City. Therefore, I am very familiar with packs that roam in and out of the Park are hunted. In 2012, the Lamar alpha female named '06 was shot and killed in my valley along with the alpha male. I watched the disruption that occurred that winter with her pups. Every few days they went back into the Park to search for their mom, then return to my valley where the elk were. These young wolves were poor inexperienced hunters killing mostly deer. When spring arrived, they all dispersed and the Lamar wolf pack has struggled ever since. Prior to the 2012 hunt season, I watched wolves self-regulate. I also observed as the elk relearned their native instincts of how to live with wolves.

I have several fears regarding the extensive hunting that goes on surrounding Yellowstone Park. Un-hunted wolves of Yellowstone are able to maintain their cohesive family structure. Wolves outside the Park are hunted relentlessly, with mostly young inexperienced wolves being killed. It is a question: how does that constant pressure, over time, change and affect wolf family structure and also quite possibly their genetic integrity. What kind of wolf are we humans creating with the dual and continuous pressures of hunting and controls?

Yellowstone Park is one of the few places in the U.S. where wolves can go about their natural lives, living and dying as nature intended. I believe there is only one (1) pack that stays within the boundaries of the Park. All the other packs venture in and out of the Park's borders where they are unknowingly subject to a hunt. And these "Park" wolves in particular are incredibly vulnerable to being shot as they are so accustomed to humans.

Wolves do roam, but I'd like to ultimately see a larger "science" buffer surround the Park in order to preserve the natural instincts of these "core" wolves; wolves that at a future date might be very important for genetics and pack instincts. We do not know how climate change along with hunting/trapping pressures will disrupt future prey/predator movements.

Montana can lead the way in modeling tolerance. I urge you to seriously consider reducing your quota to as low as possible in these two zones.

Thanks for your consideration,

Leslie Patten
178 Sunlight Rd.,
Cody WY

99.From: Marianne Burdick <burdick14@yahoo.com>

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2020 1:11 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners,

Please find attached a letter requesting a change/reduction to the wolf quota in units 313 and 316.

Thank you,

Marianne Burdick

Marianne Burdick
215 McManus Road
Patterson NY 12563

January 14, 2020

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commissioners,

I am respectfully requesting that you reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit. I personally believe the quota should be zero in units adjacent to Yellowstone National Park but I understand that isn't an option.

The argument by some that wolves have reduced the elk herds in these units is not accurate. In 2011, the year wolf hunting returned, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) counted 3,259 elk in unit 313 and considered that unit "at objective." (2011 Statewide Elk Estimate, FWP) In 2018 unit 313 had 5,738 elk. The population had increased by 76% over the 2011 count and was "over objective." (2018 Statewide Elk Trend Estimate, FWP)

Hunters are not losing out to wolves in these units. In 2018 in unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database) In 2018 in unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. (FWP online harvest database) In both units the Hunter Success Rate was higher in 2018 than in 2011.

Many wolves taken in these two units are Yellowstone wolves. The 2005 FWP Elk Management Plan states that units 313 and 316 support the Northern Yellowstone elk herd. The National Park Service (NPS) calls these elk the Northern Range herd. Yellowstone wolves follow this food source whether the elk are in the park or outside the park in units 313 and 316. But most wolves and elk return to the park as winter ends. Senator Mike Phillips reported that of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Data from collars of killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park. (2019 comment by Senator Phillips to Montana Senate re: SB 185) So the number of wolves living in Yellowstone's Northern Range helps determine the number of wolves hunted outside the park in 313 and 316. In 2011, the Yellowstone Wolf Project counted 38 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report 2011) In 2018, they counted 39 Northern Range wolves. (YWP Annual Report 2018) While the number of wolves hunting elk stayed consistent, the number of elk in unit 313 increased by 76%.

Wolves are plentiful elsewhere. In Montana, wolves are considered big game, and hunters can legally shoot them. But do they have to shoot them in units 313 and 316? In 2011, hunters and trappers took 166 wolves statewide. (2011 MT Wolf Hunting Season Report, FWP) In 2017, they took 254 wolves statewide. (2017 MT Wolf Harvest Report, latest report available online)

If the commissioners reduce the quota in 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take. Those two wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total. A demographic change supports reducing the quota. FWP records reveal the number of wolf licenses sold in 2017 (latest data online) was 8% lower than the number sold in 2011. (2011 MT Wolf Hunting Season Report. 2017 MT Wolf Harvest Report) Meanwhile, 21% more visitors came to Yellowstone in 2017 compared to 2011. (NPS data) Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant. Watching wolves or grizzly bears are two of the biggest draws of visitors to Yellowstone, according to a past NPS study. A 2018 peer-reviewed NPS study found Yellowstone visitors still ranked seeing wildlife as just below "extremely important." Not only have more wildlife watchers come, they've left more money behind: Yellowstone visitors spent 28% more money in 2018 than they spent in 2012. (NPS data) Visitor dollars create jobs in the Montana gateway communities of Gardiner, Silver Gate/Cooke City, and West Yellowstone. With fewer hunters and more wildlife watchers, wolves in these units are more valuable alive than dead.

Experience shows that units 313 and 316 have gone over quota in the past. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. So the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

Thank you for your consideration.



Marianne Burdick

100.**From: Patrick Hoppe** <patrickwhoppe@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2020 1:18 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Reduction In Wolf Quotas HD 313 and 316

Please distribute this email to the following since individual emails are not listed on your website. Or, please provide me with each individuals email address and I will resend them directly.

Mark Deleray, Region 3 Supervisor
Pat Byorth, Commissioner
Tim Aldrich, Commissioner

Richard Stuker, Vice-Chairman
Logan Brower, Commissioner
Shane Colton, Chairman

Once you have had a chance to review the attached letter, let me know if you have any questions.

I would appreciate a response from each the individuals the letter is addressed to.

Sincerely,
Patrick Hoppe
Lifelong Gardiner Resident
January 16, 2020

Mark Deleray, Region 3 Supervisor
1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59718

Pat Byorth, Commissioner
2360 Whitetail Road
Bozeman, Mt 59715

Tim Aldrich, Commissioner
3340 Rodeo Road
Missoula, MT 59803

Richard Stuker, Vice-Chairman
1155 Boldt Road
Chinook, MT 59523

Logan Brower, Commissioner
P.O. Box 325
Scobey, MT 59263

Shane Colton, Chairman

335 Clark
Billings, MT 59101

Re: Proposed Reduction in Wolf Quotas in H.D. 313 and 316

Dear Regional Supervisor, Chairman and Commissioners:

This letter is in response to the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks proposal to reduce the quotas of the wolf harvest in Hunting Districts 313 and 316. I am adamantly opposed to this proposal. Three years ago Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks reduced the harvest in these two hunting districts from 6 wolves to two. Admittedly this was done for social reasons to appease Yellowstone National Park and other outside entities opposed to hunting. Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks admitted that their reasoning stemmed from complaints by Yellowstone National Park that the harvest of wolves in these areas reduced the chances of tourists seeing wolves in the park.

This new proposal is only a continuation of that thought process. There is no possible way that the harvest of one wolf as compared to two wolves could be significant either socially or biologically. The population of wolves in Yellowstone National Park is healthy and more than meets the objectives of the original EIS. A further change is not needed and only adds to the continued feelings that hunters, sportsmen, ranchers, and private land owners have no say in their management.

Let's be clear that this nonsignificant reduction of the wolf harvest is only a step in the direction of establishing a no hunting buffer zone around the park. I believe this started in 1995 with the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park. Since that time hunting opportunities have been reduced drastically. At this time, the public is only allowed three weeks of hunting without a special permit. I am sure, this trend will continue until Hunting District 313 and 316 no longer exist for any type of hunting.

Before ending this letter, I would like to know who in the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks proposed this alternative and possibly more important who in this same agency agrees with it. It is time the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks first starts to manage wildlife for biological reason and second for social reasons but only if equal for the general public as well as Yellowstone National Park and their special interest groups.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Patrick Hoppe, Landowner/Business Owner

PO Box 1141

Gardiner, MT

406-570-8230

101.From: Shane and Sharona Gilbert <gil59602@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 4:12 PM

To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on Proposal to Change Wolf Quota in Units 313 and 316

Dear Commissioners

I am writing you about the recent proposal to reduce wolf quotas in units 313 and 316. I am a native Montanan, born and raised in Glasgow, MT. This meant we were close to Ft. Peck's bison and elk. We saw those frequently. When my parents took us to Yellowstone (pre-1995), my mom wanted so badly to see a moose or a bear. But all we saw were bison and elk. While those animals were neat, they were also common (to us anyways, my mom got a lot of weird looks when she would say "oh, it's just an elk/bison). For a long time, I had little interest in going back to Yellowstone. It wasn't until 2010 that I returned with my husband and son. Again it was neat, but we didn't see some of the animals we were hoping to: wolves and grizzlies. Since then, we have returned to the park for winter in 2011, and spring in both 2012 and 2013, summer again in 2017, and winter again in 2019. The diversity of this park is much more interesting to us now. We took my parents on the second spring trip and they saw their first grizzly bears and wolves. But there have been several bears and wolves from the park that have been killed by hunters. For several years in a row the wolf harvest in units 313 and 316 have gone over their limits. So if this decision is really based on science, aren't the elk populations in unit 313 over its objective? Are the elk harvest success rates for hunters in both those units below what they should be? We assume that we can't treat this area differently, even though the reality is that it is quite different so how can it be treated the same? Tourism has had influence over wildlife management before. Park rangers actually used to reduce the elk herds within YNP before tourism became as popular. But once visitors started coming, it wasn't good PR. Without either predators or management the elk population went from 4,000 to 20,000 and there were undeniable problems with that. And 20,000 elk did not draw the number of tourists that the bears and wolves do now. I am not sure if you have read the article on the bobcat that brings in \$308,000 a year (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2017/07/13/this-bobcat-brings-in-308000-a-year/> [washingtonpost.com]). We just spent several days in West Yellowstone this December looking for him. Didn't see a bobcat but we did see our first pine martin. I also found snow bacon (see attached). There has got to be more to Montana's wilderness than what you can shoot. I still think there is plenty of room for that, just remember that only 8% of the population does hunt. There can be some space

made for the rest of us too. I think what most of the non-consumptive users are asking for is that our interests are also considered when you make these decisions. Thank you for considering this proposal and your time.

Sharona Gilbert



102.*From: Michelle Beckman <beckfarm2002@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 12, 2020 7:08 PM
To: FWP Commission <FWComm@mt.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment on Wolf Quota in Unit 313 & 316*

Please find attached my letter in regards to the Wolf Quota in Units 313 & 316

Regards,

Don Meyer

Jan. 10, 2020

RE: Public comment on Wolf Quota in Unit 313 & 316

To The Commissioners of the Montana Fish and Wildlife, I am asking that you please consider reducing the wolf quota in Unit 313 and Unit 316 to just one wolf per unit.

As a yearly visitor to Yellowstone's Lamar Valley, I am aware that many wolves have been taken over the years - animals that are used to non-threatening humans - who crossed a boundary line they are oblivious to - and are shot.

Collared animals harvested is disturbing to me due to the fact of so much money spent on data collected, the collar and the means to track it...a terrible waste of money and data lost.

According to information I have seen, hunters harvested more elk in 2018 than in 2011 in Units 313 and 316... contradicting the belief that hunters are taking less elk due to the wolf population.

The wolf population in Yellowstone is also on the decline - another factor in hoped for reduction of wolf kills in 313 and 316.

Each summer I come out to the park area from Illinois - my only vacation destination. I rent cabins, hotel rooms, rent a car, buy fuel and food - in excess of 2,000 each time. I am, to say the least, not thrilled with park wolves being shot, by some hunters, just to anger wolf watchers. Nowhere else in the lower 48 can one watch in amazement, the wolf... kids are thrilled beyond words and older folks love to finally see a wild wolf in their lifetime. The monetary value of a live wolf far exceeds that of a wolf license - a dead animal. As you are aware, visitors' numbers are high in YNP - creating jobs for various business and more tax dollars for the communities as well.

I thank you for your time and consideration in reducing the wolf quota to just one animal in Unit 313 and Unit 316 - bordering the Nations first and most beloved park. It is an amazing experience for people to see their first ever wild wolf or grizzly.

As one lady from Germany told me, on a hillside in Lamar, "You Americans have no idea what you have here in Yellowstone."

Best regards,

Don Meyer

103.

RE: Public comment on proposal to change wolf quota in units 313 and 316

01/15/2020

Dear Montana Commissioners,

I would like to take the time to respectfully request that the Montana Fish & Wildlife commissioners reduce the quota in Wolf Management Units 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit.

The 2005 FWP Elk Management Plan states that units 313 and 316 support the Northern Yellowstone elk herd a/k/a The Northern Range herd per NPS. Yellowstone wolves follow this food source whether the elk are in the park or outside of the park in units 313 and 316. But most wolves and elk return to the park as winter ends.

Senator Mike Phillips has recently reported that of the 37 Yellowstone wolves killed since hunting wolves became legal in Montana, 30 have been killed in units 313 and 316. Data from these collars of killed Yellowstone wolves shows that they spent at least 95% of their lives in the park. These are park wolves! Our wolves! Moreover, the number of wolves living in Yellowstone's Northern Range helps determine the number of wolves hunted outside the park in 313 and 316. In 2018, they counted 39 Northern Range wolves.

While the number of wolves hunting elk stayed consistent, the number of elk in unit 313 has increased by 76%.

Hunters are not losing out to wolves in these two units.

For example: In 2018, unit 313, hunters took 38% more elk than in 2011. In 2018, unit 316, hunters took 173% more elk than in 2011. Wolves manage elk. In both units the Hunter Success Rate was much higher in 2018. If the commissioners reduce the quota in 313 and 316 to one wolf per unit, hunters have two fewer wolves to take.

Those two wolves represent less than 1% of that 2017 statewide total. This year in unit 313, for example, hunters killed three wolves instead of two. Therefore, the smaller the quota in each unit, the better off wolves are.

Yellowstone National Park is the only place in Montana where non-consumptive wolf watchers have a reasonable chance of seeing wolves in the wild. The increase in the number of people who want to shoot wolves with a camera compared with the decrease in the number who want to shoot wolves with a rifle is significant. There is plenty opportunity for hunter to kill wolves in the rest of Montana. This small protected area of 313 and 316 should be managed differently, with tourism and wolf research as priorities.

As an on-going Wolf Ethologist myself, it is undeniably disturbing to research a particular collared park wolf, sometimes for years, only to have all your effort and research come to an abrupt end when the life of that park wolf ends. Montana's economy depends on wildlife watching, especially the wolves.

It's time.

Thank you for your consideration to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Gloria Straube

**Wolf Ethologist
Hannibal, Missouri**